

when the Senator from Iowa stands before us and supports plans, as I do, for a prescription drug benefit under Medicare, that will be more Federal spending. He and I will support that. We believe the seniors and disabled across America are entitled to it.

We have to make sure we reserve enough money, in terms of what our plans are for tax cuts and deficits and debt reduction, so we can still make investments to make sure there is a prescription drug benefit under Medicare.

Let me add another point. The Senator from Iowa understands as well as anyone that we are going to face a balloon payment in Social Security and Medicare when the baby boomers all show up. If we do not make plans right now to protect Medicare and Social Security, we will find ourselves without the resources to take care of these people. We made a promise that throughout their working lives, if they paid into Social Security and Medicare, it would be there when they needed it. We are not providing for that with President Bush's tax cut. In fact, in order to fund his tax cut, he has to reach into the Medicare trust fund and take out money. If you take the money out of this trust fund, it will not be there when the baby boomers show up. The balloon payment will be there.

We will have to pay it to keep our contract with the American people, and the President's tax cut and his strategy will have eaten up the Medicare trust fund.

Senator CONRAD of North Dakota is going to offer an amendment to protect the Medicare trust fund, and Members on both sides of the aisle will have a chance to stand up and say: We are not going to raid the Medicare trust fund to pay for President Bush's tax cut. I am anxious to see how that vote comes out.

If Members of Congress believe as strongly as I do about protecting Medicare and Social Security, then they should vote in favor of Senator CONRAD's amendment, which will be offered this afternoon.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. DURBIN. I will be happy to yield to the Senator.

Mr. REID. One of the points the Senator from Illinois made during his initial statement was that he believes it is time we had a bipartisan agreement on the budget and on taxes generally.

I heard the Senator say—and I am commenting on the comment my friend from Iowa, the chairman of the very important Finance Committee, made—we are talking negatively. I say to my friend from Iowa, the Senator from Nevada and the Senator from Illinois are talking about the economy. We are talking about the need to do something about it.

If we, with a 50-50 Senate, butt heads here, we are going to get nothing done.

Will the Senator elaborate a little bit on one of his initial statements that we need to work on a bipartisan agreement to come up with something that is good for the American people?

Mr. DURBIN. The Senator understands President Bush was elected promising he was going to change the tone in Washington—more civil and more bipartisan. I actually thought he got off to a good start. He invited Democratic Congressmen and Senators to the White House. They had a good time. They watched movies, he gave them all nicknames, and it looked as if it was going to be a great change in atmosphere.

In the last week or two, things have not improved. They have gone the other way: The decision in the House of Representatives by the Republican leadership on the tax cut vote they would not even allow amendments from Democrats or Republicans on the floor. They allowed one substitute vote. Their hearings in the Ways and Means Committee did not allow any bipartisan exchange.

Frankly, I do not think that is in keeping with the President's promise of more bipartisanship. It is going to occur over here. There will be a real debate on taxes in the Senate. Senator GRASSLEY, as chairman of the Finance Committee, is going to provide an opportunity for amendments and discussion in his committee. We will have a chance to offer amendments on the floor, and a 50-50 Senate finally will debate this bill.

The last week has not been promising. The decision of the President to go to the home State of the minority leader, TOM DASCHLE, was an interesting choice. I do not think it was the best political decision for a President preaching bipartisanship, but it was his decision. I hope we can return to his promise of bipartisanship.

I guess the Senator from Nevada heard the comment of the Senator from Pennsylvania a few minutes ago about the decision in 1993 by the Clinton administration to put together a package to do something about our deficits. That package, which passed in the House and the Senate, did not have a single Republican in support of it. Many of the Republicans who are saying President Bush's tax cut is the best medicine for America also voted against President Clinton's plan in 1993.

That plan turned it around. We got out of the deficit mentality and deficit experience and started creating surpluses.

The Senator from Pennsylvania talked earlier about the unfair tax burden. I will read from the same New Yorker article I quoted earlier about that tax plan in 1993:

From 1992, the year before a supposedly onerous new marginal tax rate kicked in, through 1998, the most recent figure for

which the IRS has information available, the average after-tax income of the richest 1 percent in America rose from \$400,000 to just under \$600,000—

That is in a 6-year period of time. and from 12.2 percent of the national net income to 15.7 percent.

Our friends on the Republican side do not want to acknowledge that we not only put a plan in place that ended the deficits in this country but also created income, wealth, and prosperity, the likes of which we have not seen in modern history. Now comes President Bush saying I want to return to the concept that I tried in Texas, where I started with a surplus, put in a tax cut, and ended up with a deficit.

Excuse me if many Members of the Senate are skeptical of that approach.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Time has expired. Under the previous order, the time of 12:30 having arrived, the Senate will stand in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:30 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m.; and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. INHOFE).

BANKRUPTCY REFORM ACT OF 2001—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 30 minutes for closing remarks on amendment No. 29, as modified, and amendment No. 32 to be equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 29, AS MODIFIED

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, my amendment is designed to protect the Social Security trust fund and the Medicare trust fund. It has been called the Medicare-Social Security lockbox. That is a good description. It is designed to try to prevent these trust funds from being used for other purposes, from being used as we saw in the past for spending on other programs.

A quick description of what my amendment provides is the following:

First, it protects Social Security surpluses in each and every year;

Second, it takes the Medicare Part A trust fund off budget just as we have taken the Social Security trust fund off budget, again to try to protect it from being raided and used for other purposes;

Third, it gives Medicare the same protections as Social Security;

Fourth, it provides strong enforcement legislation and strong enforcement provisions to make certain that protections hold.

The alternative—the legislation that will be offered by my colleague, the Senator from New Mexico, chairman of